

Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

Reserve
1-9844
675



Newsletter



GRADUATE SCHOOL ★ USDA

February 5, 1960

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

February 8 Classes begin for spring semester

March 1 Faculty Luncheon--
With Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt as the speaker

Twenty years ago when our high school brought Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt to speak in Hamilton, Ohio, one of our main concerns was to find seats for an overflow crowd. And we face the same problem March 1, when Mrs. Roosevelt speaks at our faculty luncheon.

Time has not diminished Mrs. Roosevelt's drawing power. Even though we limit our attendance to our usual policy there will not be room for all. This luncheon will be held at twelve noon, Tuesday, March 1, in the Madison Room, Presidential Arms, 1320 G Street, N. W. The price will be \$2.50. Reservations can be made and tickets purchased in the Graduate School office. Your check for \$2.50, payable to the Graduate School, U. S. Department of Agriculture, must accompany mail requests. We recommend you secure your tickets early. Last day to secure tickets, if they are still available, is noon Friday, February 26, 1960. Seth Jackson, who has known Mrs. Roosevelt for several years, extended our invitation to speak at a luncheon. We are indebted to him.

* * *

Registration for the spring semester occupies the center of the stage in Graduate School activities as we go to press with this issue of the NEWSLETTER. We are offering 10 new courses: Plant Science for Backyard Gardeners; Documentation; Science and the Modern World; Historical Geology;

Modern Physics (to be taught at the NIH Center); Staff Function of Management Analysis; Marriage and the Family; Principles of Hydrography; Art and Ideas: Western Europe; and Meteorological Instruments and Observations.

Remember that as a member of the faculty or one of our committees you are entitled to enroll for courses in the Graduate School by paying only the registration fee of \$5.00.

* * *

"What's 'feedback '?" asked a student participant at the end of the morning session of our workshop at the 4-H Center, January 23.

"It's a word used to indicate how well communication is taking place," said the participant whose use of the term had prompted the question.

"Its original meaning was to describe the returning of the fraction of the input of an electric oscillation to the input to which the input is added at the proper phase," said the physicist.

"It refers to a mechanical control such as the thermostat," said the engineer.

"It's a poor word, in my opinion, because it describes an organic process in mechanical terms," said the economist.

"It's jargon and it's overworked," said the editor.

As I listened to the question and definitions, I thought how well this illustrates what we're trying to make clear here. Each individual reshapes what he sees and hears to fit his private world. And I was glad to see the sparks of emotion that flashed with each definition. They helped to illuminate a learning situation. We would remember what we heard.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the almost 200 teachers, resource people and students who joined us at the 4-H Center for a workshop on "How We Learn."

Here is how our panel of reporters--Wayne D. Rasmussen, Layne R. Beaty and Herman C. Ellinghausen--summarized our conclusions.

Motivation: The teacher's job is to add to each student's motivation. Basic to this job is an assurance that each student is an individual and each student is an individual and each class contains a wide background and level of experience.

Communication: A key element in effective two-way communication is a climate or attitude of permissiveness in class. More rapport, participation and feedback are needed.

Evaluation: Evaluation should be continuing with self-evaluation by student and by the teacher. More counselling is needed at the beginning, during and at the end of the course. Grades are necessary, but emphasis and use should vary with different courses, instructors, etc. The teacher should get more information about the student and provide for more participation and feedback.

We learned of the need for: (1) more detailed and accurate course descriptions; (2) more information about school policies; (3) more information about each student's background; (4) someone on duty in the office where students can get information about the school at night; (5) access to the USDA Library for students and faculty at night.

George Stevens of the Graduate School staff is assembling the material for a full report on the workshop. This will be in the form of a teacher's guide to the theory and practice of teaching adults. We hope to have copies ready for distribution early in March.

* * *

If you have inquiries from employees, friends, or relatives outside the Washington area who are interested in the Graduate School, you may wish to send them a copy of our correspondence bulletin.

Among the courses listed are three new ones that are attracting students: "Directed Change in Contemporary Cultures," prepared by M. L. Wilson and Thelma A. Dreis; "Federal Personnel Procedure," prepared by Henry C. Starns; and "Plain Letterwriting," prepared by William S. Harris and Artel Ricks.

* * *

The Graduate School was well represented when President Eisenhower visited the agricultural fair in New Delhi in December. The man you saw on television showing him around the fair was J. K. McClaren. Not in the pictures but working actively behind the scenes was James H. McCormick, who went to India in September and will remain until the fair is over.

* * *

The January, 1960 issue of The Annals of The American Academy of Political and Social Science is devoted to an examination of "Perspectives on

Government and Science." One of the articles entitled "Research Planning and Control in the USDA: The Experience of an Old and Well-Established Research Agency" is by Byron T. Shaw, Administrator, Agricultural Research Service, and a member of our General Administration Board.

* * *

A speaking engagement in Baltimore prevented my hearing Dean James E. Gates of the University of Georgia when he spoke at our faculty luncheon last month. He's an alumnus of the Graduate School, I understand, who took a course in scientific German to meet the requirements for his doctorate.

* * *

The spoken excels the written word when it comes to selling art books. Last month, you may recall, I mentioned in the NEWSLETTER a superb art book, LOOKING AT MODERN PAINTING. Perhaps that set some of you to thinking about buying copies. Our pitch for the book at the workshop sold every copy in stock and brought orders for seven more.

* * *

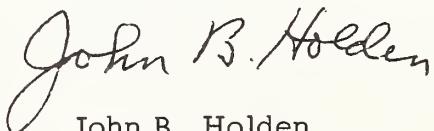
We read the announcement of the 22 finalists in the 12th annual Arthur Flemming Awards program with particular interest because one of them--James Enneis--is a member of our faculty, and another--Christopher Henderson--is the son of Chris Henderson, a member of our General Administration Board.

* * *

Maurice Fried left January 16 for New Delhi on a month's assignment with UN-FAO. He will lecture and conduct laboratory demonstrations on the use of radioisotopes in soils research at the Indian Agricultural Research Institute. Participants are 25 young soil scientists from Asian countries.

* * *

Sincerely,



John B. Holden
Director